

Via electronic filing

June 6, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 – 12th Street SW, Room TWB 204
Washington, D.C. 20554

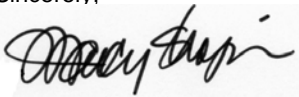
Ex Parte letter re: WC Docket No. 11-42, CC Docket No. 96-45, and WC Docket No. 03-109

Dear Federal Communications Commission:

Open Access Connections has advocated to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission to make it possible for there to be a wireless Lifeline program in Minnesota. We filed the following letters in the Minnesota Lifeline proceeding. We are sharing these letters with the Federal Communications Commission because it is important for the Commission to hear from consumers about the urgent need for the Lifeline program to be available and accessible to all low income people as well as the need for quality wireless Lifeline products to be available as you consider reforming the Lifeline program. These letters were written by very low income people who participate in groups sponsored by Open Access Connections. Many of the participants are currently or have recently been homeless.

Please contact me if you have questions or would like further information about these letters.

Sincerely,



Marcy Shapiro
Executive Director

**LETTERS SENT TO MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
REGARDING THE NEED FOR A LIFELINE PROGRAM FOR CELL PHONES**
Letters written January, 2011

I am looking for phone service. But this program will help very much. Looking for work and to contact will definitely help. But at this time the phone service that I don't have will help many things. I have not had phone for years. This would have important to my life. And at my age there's a lot of things that will make the hook up that I need to live and look for work. Work with us, open some doors and thank you very much.
Help Help Help Help.
P,S, Make it happen.

P.U.C. Commissioners

We really need the cell phone service in Minnesota for low income people. It's important to make doctor appointments & when I go out & about shopping, appointments & etc. that I can let my husband know that I'm ok, given today's society. Being low-income we tried a cell phone for a couple months & found out with our bills, medicine and prescriptions that we couldn't afford it. So when I leave our house without a cell phone, he's home and worries. I call from Cub and other stores (not many) that let you use their phone, so I can let him know I'm ok. Rainbow only let's you use their phone to call a cab. Most of the time the number 1 store I shop is Rainbow (depending on coupons.) So given this I believe Minnesota should include free cell phones for low-income and seniors.

Sincerely,
Margaret and Harold Bradehoft

1-25-11

We seniors need this service/program, as the majority of the senior population are on fixed income/budget. Even for the homeless, this would be great. It would be affordable and help with at least having the chance to keep in touch with potential employers! Yes, this would be the thing to do for Minnesota. I mean really, how many pay phones do you see anymore?

Respectfully
Mark A. Carter

To Whom It May Concern;

My name is Patrice Smith. I have children and grandchildren who I have responsibility for, and when I am out it would be a great help to be able to communicate with the school and day care. I also have a PCA client that it would be easier for him to contact me in case of an emergency. A cell phone would help out a lot.

Patrice Smith

January 24, 2011

To: P.U.C. Commissioner

I am a concerned citizen on disability and also over 50. I heard about a free cell phone for seniors that is SafeLink Wireless. This service is available in 29 states but not in our state of Minnesota.

I am wondering if Minnesota may have a similar plan for seniors and/or low income families? I would like to know if Minnesota can also be a part of this plan. Cell phones are expensive to keep running every month.

Please help us.

Thanks for your consideration,
Sincerely,
Gloria B. Johnson

I am a senior citizen. I could use a cell phone, especially for emergencies. I live in Minnesota. Could you start a phone plan here?

Sincerely,
James Allen

I am really interested in the plan for cell phones, for us that are over 50. It would be a very good service. I could use a phone in case of emergencies and for other things like doctors appointment's and dial a ride. This would be a very good thing.

Thank you
Melvin Browning

Tuesday Jan. 25, 2011
(Homeless - Let's break the cycle)

Attn: Public Utility Commission

A cell phone is my life-line. Please allow the passing of this bill. It is greatly appreciated, and prove to be an invaluable resource in my life! Thank you:

Respectfully
Eugene J. Lidden

P.S. God bless all of you:

Again thank you:

(Here are a few usages)

1. Employment
2. Housing Search
3. Emergency Contact
4. Family and loved ones
5. Security
6. Peace of mind
7. Independence

1/25/11

To: Public Utilities Commission
Subject: cell phone

I, Marcellus Rose have been a senior member of the 50+ Group for all of it's inception and I have heard of SafeLink Wireless, and it's available in 29 states for senior citizens but not in MN! We seniors in MN desperately need this service to have communication At All Time!!

Marcellus A. Rose

To Our Honorable Public Utilities Commissioners,

I spent over 2 years in Minnesota Homeless; either sleeping on the ground, in a tent or in my compact car. The last year I spent four nights on a couch or a bed. I also spent 11 consecutive days and nights outdoors in below zero temperatures that year. To facilitate getting off the streets I got a full time job. Even so, I couldn't afford housing, but I could afford a used car and the payments to get it. So, I got an old Geo Tracker and it became my transportation, storage space and home. I got a voicemail number from Twin Cities Voicemail so people could reach me to leave messages. Between having transportation and a voicemail number, I was able to get help from food shelves, doctors, Century Plaza (downtown) and various agencies for the homeless which expedited my moving into transitional housing and off of the streets. Had I not had transport/voicemail, I believe I would have spent another winter homeless, and likely would have died as a result. I am now a member of Open Access Connections Board of Directors and St. Stephens Homeless Against Homeless Group, and I spend a couple of hours every Monday evening at the Salvation Armies Harbor Light Shelter (1010 Currie Av, downtown) doing volunteer work and giving out voicemail numbers to the needy. Because of this experience I am acutely aware of the need of poverty-stricken or homeless persons to have access to communication in order to help themselves. Seeing tears of gratitude or smiles and thank yous for helping people is a good feeling, but every time someone asks why we don't have a cell phone program like Wisconsin (and other state they somehow know of). It breaks my heart to tell them our public officials are still working on it. Please help bring this service to our most vulnerable citizens as swiftly as possible.

God Bless You,
Brian Sullivan

1/24/2011

Sent to: Public Utilities Commission

Subject: Free Cell Phones

SafeLink Wireless offers free cell phone to seniors in other states. (Twenty-nine state to be specific.) When does the Company SafeLink Wireless intend to have the same services & seniors in Minnesota? And of course low income families. How can Minnesota seniors and low income families get this service.

Thank you,
Kwadwo O. Domfeh

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to know why a federally funded phone that would be helpful to myself or acquaintances is not available to us. For some of us who are low income or have special needs, we have circumstances and situations that can be helped by having these phones.

When we as people are more efficient, it's better for all of us. Self sufficiency and independence for individuals makes us more productive members of society, and less of a burden to society. These phones will help with jobs, housing, transportation and health concerns. These phones are definitely needed in our community. Please help us get them.

Respectfully,
Regina Mune

P.U.C.

We really need the cell phone service free for low income handicapped & seniors that can't afford it especially for emergencies.

Sincerely,
Rose Gartner